Backgammon

Written by Pandasoft for the John Sands Sega
Personal Computers. Copyright Pandasoft 1985

Minimum System Sega SC3000, 48K total RAM system,
ie. BASIC IIIB cartridge.

The object of the game

To move all of your pieces around the playing board and
then to remove these pieces, by the throw of two dice,
before your opponent has done so.
This game may be played by one or two players using one
or two joysticks, or using the four directional cursor keys
(↑ ↓ ← →) and the CR key.
In the one player mode, you play against your Sega
Computer which always plays BLACK and always plays
its best! In the two player mode, Player One is GREEN and
Player Two is BLACK.

Tape Loading Instructions

For John Sands Sega SC3000 Personal Computers
1. The computer is shown as in the user instruction
card and insert the BASIC cartridge.
2. Connect a lead from the IN socket at the back of the
computer to the OUT socket of your John Sands Sega
Data Recorder, or the earphone socket of your cassette
player.
3. Switch the computer on.
4. While holding down the FUNC key press the key with
the word LOAD written above it. The word LOAD should
appear on the screen. Press the CR key, the message
*Loading Start will appear on the screen.
5. Insert the tape in your cassette player or Data Recorder.
Press the PLAY button on the cassette player, or LOAD on
the data recorder. If everything is set correctly the
computer will put up a message telling you that it has
found a program. The program will then be loaded from
the tape recorder to the computer.
6. If the volume and tone controls are set correctly, after
a while the message *Loading End will appear on the
screen. You will probably be most successful with the
volume and tone settings in the top half of their range. If they are

set incorrectly the message "Tape Read Error will appear, meaning that you will have to rewind the tape and go to step 4 and try different levels.

7. To start the program press the key with RUN above it along with the FUNC key, the program will then begin.

8. There are two copies of the program on the labelled side of the tape.

Method of Play

You must move your pieces according to the numbers shown on the throw of the two dice.

GREEN moves from lower right to upper right in a clockwise motion. BLACK moves from upper right to lower right in an anti-clockwise motion.

To begin the game, answer the simple questions on screen and the screen gameboard will appear. Your Sega Computer then randomly chooses who goes first.

To make your move, you must first press either the joystick fire button or the CR key to throw your dice. The numbers shown on the dice are considered individually and not in sum total. Thus, you may move one piece by the number shown on one die for each move. The normal number of moves per person is **two** except when a DOUBLE is thrown, then the number of moves becomes **four**. You can either move the same piece for all your moves, or any other combination of pieces you choose.

Move the flashing triangular cursor (by using the joystick or the cursor keys) to the one of the piece you wish to move. Press the fire button and the topmost piece in that row will turn BLUE to indicate that this piece is the one to be moved.

To move your nominated piece, position the flashing cursor to the required position and press the fire button or CR key again. The BLUE piece will disappear and move to the nominated position. This procedure is carried out for each of the number of moves available to you. Any position on the playing board on which two or more pieces of the opposition sit, is called a **Blocked Point**. You cannot land on a Blocked Point, however you may move over the Blocked Point if the number on the die allows.

Any position on which you have only one piece is called a **Blot**. Since pieces of the opposite colors cannot occupy the same position, when you land on an opponent's Blot, it is removed and replaced by your piece. This is called

a Hit. The removed piece is then placed on the Bar.

The **Bar** is the position from where you must re-enter the game *before* moving any other pieces. Entering is accomplished by moving the piece from the Bar to the position indicated by either of the die being thrown, as long as that position is not a blocked point. The entry points for GREEN are the first six positions on the top right of the board; for BLACK, they are the first six positions on the bottom right of the board.

If you cannot enter because both entry points are blocked, then you must indicate to your Sega Computer that you cannot move, by placing the flashing triangular cursor over the word NO and press the joystick fire button or the CR key. Your Sega will then check to see if your decision is valid. If so, play then passes to your opponent. A **Shutout** occurs when all six entry points are blocked by your opponent's pieces. You must indicate NO each time it is your turn until you are able to move.

The same procedure with the command NO applies if you find that you cannot move any of your pieces using normal screen boardgame play. If you decide to change a move after assigning a BLUE piece, you may do so by moving over to NO and resetting that move.

Note: If you try to make an illegal move, your Sega Computer will disallow that move and you will have to move again. When this happens, you will notice that your BLUE piece has gone back to its original color. You now have to re-assign a BLUE piece to that move.

Once you have moved all your pieces into your **Inner Table** (or GREEN – the six positions on the lower right of the board, and for BLACK – the six positions on the top right of the board), you may then begin to **Bear Off.**

Bearing Off means removing your pieces from the playing board to **Rest** by the roll of the dice. You cannot start bearing off until all 15 of your pieces are in your Inner Table. You may then either bear off pieces from positions corresponding to the thrown, or you may move your pieces within your Inner Table according to the numbers shown on the dice.

Procedure for bearing off is the same as for a normal move, however you must move the flashing triangular cursor (after nominating the piece) over the word Rest, and then press the joystick fire button or the CR key. You must use your entire roll if possible. This means that if you roll a six but have no pieces on the sixth position, you

must take a piece off the highest point upon which you do have pieces. The same rule applies if you throw a DOUBLE. However, you cannot bear off a piece if the point indicated on the die is vacant and there are pieces on a higher counting position. If while bearing off, a piece in your Inner Table is hit, that piece goes to the Bar and you must re-enter as described earlier. You cannot continue to bear off until this piece is back in your Inner Table.

A game is won when either player bears off all his or her pieces first. A GAMMON is won if your opponent has not born off any pieces. A BACKGAMMON is won if your opponent has not born off any pieces, and has one or more pieces in the winner's Inner Table or on the Bar.

Quitting

If, at any stage of play, you wish to quit, move the flashing triangular cursor over the word Quit and press the joystick fire button or the CR key. Your Sega Computer will then verify your request. To answer its questions, either push the joystick left or right or use the – or + cursor keys to make the desired answer flash; then press the joystick fire button or the CR key.

Good Luck and enjoy the Game!

Other titles in the **Screen Boardgames** series for the John Sands Sega SC3000 Series computers include **Segathello** and **Wordblock**.

John Sands
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